

Entrepreneur Hub Impact Report 2022-2023





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Introduction from the Brunel Entrepreneur Hub

The Entrepreneur Hub Team

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The Entrepreneur Hub is the dedicated centre of entrepreneurial activity within Brunel University. We firmly believe that everyone can be entrepreneurial and that an entrepreneurial mindset can help address society's biggest challenges. Our aim is to support all students and alumni to develop this entrepreneurial mindset, empowering them for any career or future they have in mind. Some will go on to launch businesses of their own or establish a portfolio career as a freelancer.

As you will see from this report, it has been an amazing year for the Entrepreneur Hub in which we actively engaged with over 900 students, graduates and academics and provided individual support to over 219. Throughout the year, we made significant strides in supporting a diverse range of students, graduates and academics. This report offers a comprehensive overview of our ongoing progress, highlighting our initiatives and accomplishments. We remain dedicated to equipping students and graduates with essential entrepreneurial skills through various programmes and events. Notably, our first in-person 'Be Inspired' event post-pandemic attracted record attendance, and we had the highest number of Santander X awards finalists to date. We were thrilled that Brunel University's diverse entrepreneurship initiatives led to being shortlisted as an Outstanding Entrepreneurial University for the THE Awards 2023.

By highlighting some of our successes and impact, we would like to draw attention to the enormous entrepreneurial potential at Brunel and how with a strong and nurturing and support structure, that potential can be recognised and harnessed. This in turn lays the foundations for the remarkable businesses featured in the case studies below.

Entrepreneur Hub Statistics 2022-23



The Brunel Start-Up Incubator

The Start-up incubator programme offers participants free, personalised support from both internal and external specialists, who work individually with each participant. Its primary objective is to accelerate their success and prepare them for the next phase of their entrepreneurial journey.

This collaborative programme assists aspiring entrepreneurs in comprehensively understanding and developing all aspects of their business, ranging from identifying customer needs to safeguarding their ideas. By taking part in the programme, participants can cultivate a versatile skill set that will prove valuable in their future careers.

Through one-to-one mentorship, the programme guides participants in gaining a broader perspective and addressing potential knowledge gaps they may not have been aware of. Additionally, it supports with resolving start-up related challenges for the participants.

Jeffrey Oyinlola, MSc Sustainability, Entrepreneurship and Design Founder of Pick Up The Mic

“My entrepreneurial journey has been a journey of ups and downs, but most importantly a lot of lessons learned. Through programmes such as the Start-Up programme, meetings with fellow entrepreneurs, and the wide variety of events held by the Entrepreneur Hub, I have been able to learn more about what it means to be an entrepreneur. I have gained more confidence in myself and my business.”

Alexandra Stiris, BA Film Production and Theatre Co-Founder of CaveAR

“The activities that the Entrepreneur Hub have run have supported me by giving me the opportunity to speak with a wide variety of entrepreneurs from different universities. I have been able to learn about new software that I can use to level up my content and create ideas for where my business can go, as well as pitch ideas to fellow entrepreneurs and experts in their field. The feedback has been essential in developing my business.”

Louie Harvey, BSc Product Design and Engineering Founder of Funky Bird

“The Entrepreneur Hub is perfect for anyone looking to manage their own business in the future. Whether it’s a physical, digital, or service product, it enables anyone from any background to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions. The help and guidance from the entrepreneur hub team is invaluable - with an experienced team of business minded staff, and the help of previous student entrepreneurs - starting your own business becomes that bit easier.”

Sean Hayes, MSc (Online) Psychology Conversion Founder of More Connection

“The Entrepreneur Hub has helped me to clarify the vision of my business. Even more, it has given me access to a network of highly intelligent and successful business mentors who are skilful in asking the correct questions to guide your entrepreneurial journey in the right direction.”

Solveiga Murauskaite, MSc Sustainability Entrepreneurship and Design Founder of My Comfort Monitor

“The programme served as a strong motivator for further idea development. Through this journey, I have acquired a solid grasp of financial predictions and calculations, as well as a comprehensive understanding of data security guidelines and policies in general, along with the potential opportunities that lie ahead.”

Rahmanara Chowdhury, PhD Social Sciences Founder of Reflect Transformative Training

“The support from the Brunel Entrepreneur Hub has been excellent. They have a really flexible support package which allows you to focus on your individual needs through support with experts in a range of areas.”

The Brunel Freelancer Incubator

The Freelance Incubator Programme at Brunel University London offers comprehensive personalised support from both internal and external specialists, tailored to the individual needs of participants. The programme aims to advance success and prepare participants for the next phase of their freelance journey. It fosters collaboration and facilitates understanding and development of various business aspects, including customer needs and marketing strategies. Engaging in this programme also allows participants to enhance their transferable skillset, valuable for their future careers. Through one-to-one mentorship, the programme helps participants gain a broader perspective, identify and address potential gaps, and find solutions to key freelancing challenges.

**Louis Hitchcock, BA Industrial Design
Photographer**

“Working with the incubator programme has helped me to realise that I was missing key elements needed to develop a successful business, I worked with the mentoring team to develop systems and processes that has allowed me to turn my passion into a career. Highly Recommended.”



Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme (Start Up Visa)

The Start Up Visa allowed international graduates with genuine and credible business concepts and entrepreneurial abilities to stay in the UK to develop their business ideas under the guidance of the Brunel Entrepreneur Hub. Starting from 13th April 2023, the Start Up visa route was discontinued and integrated into the Innovator visa route. In this section, we present the inspiring success stories of a variety of Brunel Entrepreneurs who were supported by the Graduate Entrepreneur visa scheme.

Gracen Rubo, MSc Sustainability Entrepreneurship and Design Founder of IMPRINT

"IMPRINT was an idea born out of my MSc dissertation looking at how 3D printing could address sustainability violations in the footwear industry. The Entrepreneur Hub helped me turn my idea into a business and supported me throughout the journey, from making a business model canvas and market testing to prototype development. I was fortunate enough to work from the CRL to develop my prototypes. Today I'm working across the US and UK to launch my shoe business. None of this would have been possible without the Entrepreneur Hub and I'm so grateful to everyone there, as well as to the community of other graduates on the scheme."

Ranjeet Rathore, Law LLB (Hons) Founder of Citybution

"I have had the opportunity to turn my passions into a thriving venture. It's a journey that's taught me resilience, the value of networking, and the joy of seeing my ideas come to life. From the initial stages of brainstorming to the intricacies of business planning, the Brunel Entrepreneur Hub team's expertise has been helpful. The team's willingness to lend a helping hand, share valuable resources, and offer mentorship has truly shaped the trajectory of my entrepreneurial journey."



Embedding Entrepreneurship in the Curriculum

Embedding employability, enterprise, and entrepreneurship throughout our curriculum benefits graduates, the economy, and communities. We've collaborated closely with academics to ensure these essential skills are integrated throughout a student's programme. The Entrepreneur Hub offers customised workshops across diverse courses. By fostering these skills, we empower our graduates to make successful transitions and manage their careers effectively.

Dr Edwin Routledge, Divisional Lead/Reader - Environmental Sciences

"The Entrepreneur Hub has been a critical cog both peripherally (initially) and more centrally in the aspirations of the MSc Sustainability, Entrepreneurship and Design Programme. It has supported students in realising their entrepreneurial ambitions in many ways, and in a very personalised way.

More recently, their activities have been embedded more formally in the MSc programme, as an assessment block. Supporting students develop their early business ideas by access to networks of successful business people, entrepreneurs, and mentorship has worked extremely well."

Dr Ronan McCarthy, Reader in Biomedical Sciences

"My interactions with the Entrepreneur Hub over the last number of years have been instrumental in the development of two new study blocks designed at integrating entrepreneurship and innovation into the undergraduate biosciences curriculum. The creation of these modules was specifically tailored to the Royal Society of Biology new accreditation criteria and involved innovative teaching practices including elevator pitches, peer-to-peer assessment, team-based learning and guest lectures from start-up founders and CEOs. Each of these activities was supported by the Entrepreneur Hub, either through direct delivery of some of the content or through support in design and creation of content...The Entrepreneur Hub is a key element that distinguishes Brunel from other institutions, fostering and developing a spirit and culture of intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship in students from the moment they begin their Brunel journey."



Entrepreneur Hub Events



Global Entrepreneurship Week with Story Cube: Strategy, Sales and Storytelling

The Entrepreneur Hub celebrated Global Entrepreneurship Week in November with a workshop covering strategy, sales, and storytelling led by the organisation Story Cube. The founders, Michael Murdoch and Robbie Dale, possess over 30 years of brand experience, and have supported numerous organisations worldwide in launching and growing successfully. The founders guided participants through the workshop using real-life examples, encouraging questions for deeper understanding. The event was open to all who were interested in pitching and selling confidently.



Santander X UK Awards 2022

The Santander X UK Awards, launched in 2011, are a leading national student and graduate business pitching contest, recognising innovative ventures from UK universities. This year's programme featured two categories: Launch for new businesses and Accelerate for growing ones. After a rigorous six-week training period which took place in October and November, winners were selected from a pool of 120 businesses. 3 Brunel ventures participated in the event including Francis Jones of STEM@ Home, Joshua King and Georgia Williams of Zeal Lifestyle and Joanna Power of Lylo. The final showdown in London took place in December and involved a high-profile judging panel, including Timothy Armoo, founder of Fanbytes, sold for an eight-figure sum at 21 years old.





Brunel Entrepreneurs - Be Inspired 2023 Event

In January, the Entrepreneur Hub hosted its annual showcase event celebrating all aspects of entrepreneurship. The event drew over 100 attendees from across the university.

The highlight of the event was an interactive panel discussion between panellists who shared valuable entrepreneurial insights from their diverse experiences and backgrounds. The discussion was facilitated by Andrew Mossop, founder of Student Skill Store, a start-up mentor and communications expert. The panellists included: Rob Bourne - Global Brand Marketing Manager at Red Bull, Kay Kukoyi - CEO and Founder of Purposeful Group, Geoff Rodgers - Brunel's Pro Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Employment, and Anil Puri - a Brunel graduate and Venture Building and Commercial Strategy Advisor at WeSprint.

Following the panel discussion, the event showcased some of Brunel's recent graduate and current student start-ups, where attendees interacted with them, gaining inspiration from their entrepreneurial journeys and receiving firsthand advice. The exhibited start-ups included Francis Jones, Founder of STEM@Home, Anastasia Georgievskaya, Founder of Scentient, Josh King and Georgia Williams, Founders of Zeal, and Simone Panella, Founder of Dyamotech.

The evening concluded with networking opportunities between Brunel budding entrepreneurs, recent graduates, and guest speakers. First-year student Louis Hitchcock provided freelance photography services, capturing the atmosphere of the event, while recent graduate Jeffrey Oyinlola, the founder of Pick Up The Mic, captured video content featuring the showcased start-ups.



Brunel Entrepreneur Louie Harvey supported Giving Day

In March, Brunel University initiated a 36-hour fundraising campaign at Brunel University, appealing to supporters such as alumni, family, friends of current students and staff. The objective was to raise funds for students facing financial hardships. The fundraising efforts were aimed at four key areas: providing support to at-risk academics, assisting students in crisis, funding teaching and research excellence, and offering international opportunities to disadvantaged students. During the Giving Day event, Louie, a current student and winner of this year's venture competition, contributed by playing the saxophone in support of the cause.

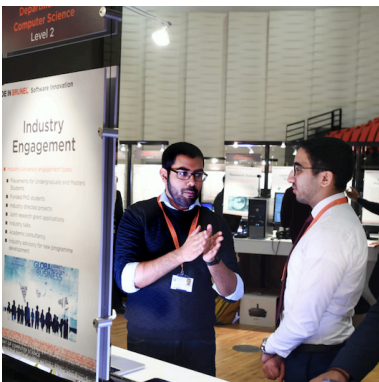


London Venture Crawl 2023

On 15th March 2023, Brunel University London collaborated with SOAS University of London to embark on the London Venture Crawl, a day-long event exploring London's top workplaces and innovation hubs. Alongside 18 other universities, 18 Brunel students took a unique route to connect with real-world businesses, experience the vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem of the UK, and develop networking and entrepreneurial skills.

The event began at SOAS University of London, where students networked and heard from inspiring entrepreneur Anil Puri, a Brunel graduate and founder of PetInstincts. Next, the group visited The Conduit, a community committed to creating a just, prosperous, and sustainable future. The third stop was Makerversity at Somerset House, where attendees learned about the pioneering community of entrepreneurs and heard from clean-tech start-up The Tyre Collective and sustainable start-up Amphico.

The final destination was RedBull UK, where students toured the space and listened to Jeffrey Oyinlola, a recent Brunel graduate and founder of Pick Up The Mic. Additionally, a virtual inter-university pitch-off competition took place, with Brunel student Simone Panella of Dyamotech winning the prestigious title of 'London Venture Crawl 2023 Pitch-off Winner.' Simone later represented London in the International Venture Crawl 2023 Pitch-off on 29th March and won.



Made in Brunel: Software Innovation 2023 - Entrepreneur Hub Awards

The Entrepreneur Hub team was invited to the Made in Brunel: Software Innovation event on 16th March 2023, where they presented an Entrepreneur Hub Award 2023 and a prize to two projects. The event provided students with an opportunity to present their projects to peers, Brunel staff, and industry experts. The Entrepreneur Hub was highly impressed by the exceptional ideas and overall quality of the projects. Following brief pitches and a short Q&A session, the prizes were awarded to the deserving winners.

Winners

1. Farm to Plate Project: Nabeela Ghailan, Muaz Hussain, Erald Lataj, Thanie Sivathevan, MD Abdur Razzak, Griffin, Denis Bugingo, Carlotta Amatulli and Isha Parekh.
2. Application of Nanotechnology in Smart Textile to Improve Healthcare Project: Ajmain Iqtidar.



Venture Competition

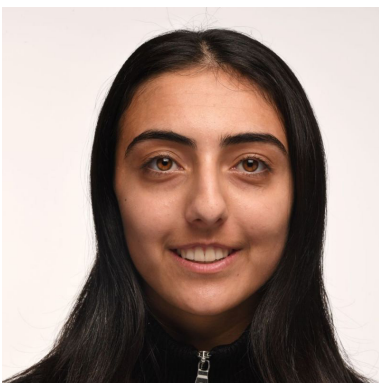
The Venture Competition in March 2023 sought promising Brunel entrepreneurs with bright ideas addressing commercial or social gaps in the market. The competition received 66 video entries from students and recent graduates, showcasing their innovative business ideas in two minutes. 28 applicants were shortlisted for stage 2. 10 finalists presented their ideas live to a panel of expert judges, competing for a share of £15,000. After each finalist's pitch and Q&A session, five winners were chosen to share the prize pot. All finalists benefited from a mentoring session with Brunel's esteemed graduate entrepreneur and competition judge, Anil Puri. They were also offered a place in the Brunel Start-up Incubator programme to foster their ideas and gain valuable feedback to grow their ventures.

Winners

1. Dr Rahmanara Chowdhury, Founder of Reflect Transformative Training
2. Simone Panella, Founder of Dyamotech
3. Louie Harvey, Founder of FunkyBird
4. Abdulrahman Albar, Founder of Bina Robotics
5. Sean Hayes, Founder of More Connection

Highly Commended

1. Anastasia Egeressy, Founder of MYLK The Oat Drink Machine
2. Bashini Addarawalage, Alexandra Stiris and Karen Western, Founders of V.RT Solutions
3. Jeffrey Oyinlola, Founder of Pick Up The Mic
4. Solveiga Murauskaite, Founder of MyComfort Monitor
5. Stacey Conteh, Founder of The Unspoken Projects



Mayor's Entrepreneur Programme and Competition

In April 2023, Jasmine Ahmed, an undergraduate psychology student, was chosen as one of 80 finalists in the Mayor's Entrepreneur Competition. The Citi Foundation funded competition aims to improve London with viable, sustainable solutions through allowing students to develop business ideas for the city. Her idea 'Grow Together' was selected for the health category.



Freelancer Awards

In June, The Freelancer Awards provided Brunel students and recent graduates with a chance to enhance their freelancing skills and compete for the title 'Brunel Freelancer of the Year.' Supported by Santander Universities, the event offered a share of £15,000 funding to the winners. We sought exceptional freelancers who balanced their studies or graduates with a side hustle or were full-time freelancers. To combat the isolation freelancers may face, we organised an online skill development workshop in May. This year, we received 30 entries from various industries across Brunel, from which we selected 10 outstanding freelancers. Four were named 'Freelancer of the Year,' with six being runners-up.

Winners

1. Andrea Soteriou, Videography and Photography
2. Louis Hitchcock, Photographer
3. Michael Barrett-Wright, Sustainable Design
4. Rachel Faturoti, Sensitivity reading, writing and editing

Highly commended

1. Aykut Adala, Product Design
2. Carys Toko, Sports Media Video Editor
3. Jemmar Samuels, Writing, Public Speaking, Social Justice Education and Facilitation, Campaigning, and Content Creation.
4. Julita Napieralska, Product Design Consulting & Workshop Technician
5. Priscilla Toko, Digital Content Creator
6. Sarah Melbourne, Power Platform Developer & Technical Specialist Driving Agile Collaboration and Impactful Solutions PG Computer Science (MSc) 2020 graduate



The Design Factory

The Design Factory London fosters multidisciplinary collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving, offering an innovative approach to education, entrepreneurship and business innovation. The Entrepreneur Hub continued to collaborate with Brunel's Design Factory team throughout the academic year to deliver workshops and mentoring sessions for the Ford Design Factory Challenge, McDonald's Sustainable Happy Meal Toy Challenge and Chelsea FC Foundation's Virtual Entrepreneurial Challenge. The prize of the final challenge involved a cultural exchange visit to our Design Factory partner at Javeriana University in Bogotá, Colombia.

Brunel Entrepreneur Achievements



Paramveer Bhachu and Joanna Power, Founders of Lylo

Joanna Power and Paramveer Bhachu, co-founders of Lylo were semifinalists at the Santander X UK awards and successfully participated in the Undaunted accelerator. Additionally, they delivered a pitch for the DIF Capital Partners - Allia Ltd Accelerator Challenge.



Mia Fang and Emmanuel Lewu, Founders of Fortuna

Mia Fang and Emmanuel Lewu, Fortuna founders and Brunel graduates, recently gained recognition on Channel 4's 'Four in a bed' show for their hotel business. The Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme played a crucial role in supporting these innovative entrepreneurs. The hotel was highlighted in the episode aired on 27 September, featuring them in all 5 episodes.



Anastasia Georgievskaya, Co-founder of Scentient

Anastasia Georgievskaya, co-founder of Scentient, secured £50,000 from Innovate UK in November 2022 to develop and commercialise a digital scent device for tracking anosmia recovery, a condition causing loss of smell which negatively impacts on quality of life and safety. She also completed the CRL accelerator, a six-month world-leading programme providing practical hands-on experience, product development, engineering, and testing support.



Victor Harabari, Co-founder of CardioCrown

Victor Harabari, a Biomedical, Biomechanics, and Bioelectronics Engineering alumnus and co-founder of CardioCrown, secured £50,000 in Innovate UK funding in November 2022. The funding supports CardioCrown's disruptive technology, empowering stroke patients to self-manage rehabilitation at home.



Francis Jones, Founder of STEM@Home

Francis Jones, the founder of STEM@Home participated in the Santander X UK competition and received recognition by being showcased at the EdTech Futures event during Bett UK at ExCeL London on 29-31 March 2023.



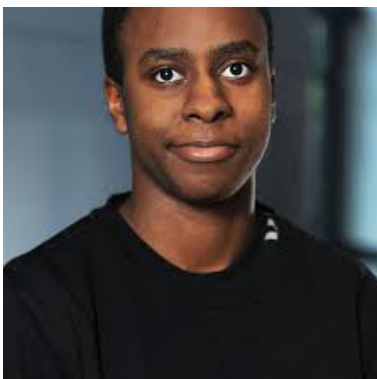
Joshua King and Georgia Williams, Founders of Zeal

The company proudly presented its flagship product at Naidex, the UK's largest disability show. Notably, it was shortlisted for two prestigious awards at the 2023 Startup Awards and won the NEXTGEN Award 2023. The company was recognised as a finalist for the Santander X UK Awards 2022 and received grants from Innovate UK.



Stephanie Monty, Founder of Ostique

Stephanie Monty, founder of Ostique, accomplished a significant milestone by launching the pioneering range of aesthetically designed ostomy bags, just six years after her graduation. The innovative products are set to positively impact the lives of ostomates worldwide.



Jeffrey Oyinlola, Founder of Pick Up The Mic

Jeffrey Oyinlola, the founder of Pick Up The Mic, played a crucial role in the Entrepreneur Hub at the Venture Crawl. He delivered a live session, sharing insights from his entrepreneurial journey. Additionally, he recorded a special podcast featuring Brunel entrepreneurs during our showcase event.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of the Entrepreneur Hub's values. Brunel University London has a vibrant, rich and dynamic population of students and graduates from around the globe, we embrace the power of Equality and Diversity as a fundamental pillar of our Strategic Plan.

We remain dedicated to fostering a culture that champions equal opportunities and reflects the true diversity of the communities we serve. By embracing and celebrating differences, we create an Entrepreneur Hub that empowers individuals to harness their unique talents and perspectives, driving innovation and growth. Together, we strive to create an inclusive ecosystem that not only supports the success of our entrepreneurs but also contributes to a more inclusive society as a whole. As an institution, we bear the responsibility of preparing our learners to thrive in a world that grows increasingly diverse and interconnected.

Gender

There is a higher proportion of male participants (51.9%) than females (47.0%) across our initiatives.

Gender	Total
Female	47.0%
Male	51.9%
Prefer not to say	1.1%

Ethnicity

Our activities involve participants from various ethnic backgrounds. The major minority groups represented are: Asian - Indian or Indian British (36.5%), Any other Asian background (8.1%), Black - African or African British (12.2%), and Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British (4.5%).

Ethnicity	Total
White - English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish or British	13.4%
White - British	2.8%
White - Irish	0.2%
White - Scottish	0.2%
Any other White background	3.4%
Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British	2.1%
Black - African or African British	12.2%
Any other Black background	1.1%
Asian - Indian or Indian British	36.5%
Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British	4.5%
Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British	3.0%
Asian - Chinese or Chinese British	2.1%
East Asian	0.4%
Any other Asian background	8.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black Caribbean or Black Caribbean British	0.2%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black African or Black African British	0.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Asian or Asian British	1.5%
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	1.1%
Arab	2.6%
Any other ethnic background	2.8%
Not known	0.9%
Prefer not to say	0.6%

BME

BME participants are in the majority with almost three times as many BME individuals engaging in our initiatives as white participants.

BME	Total
BME	78.5%
White	20.0%
Unknown	1.5%

Disability

11.9% of participants have a disclosed disability, 88.1% have not disclosed a disability.

Disability	Total
Yes	11.9%
No	88.1%

Level of Study

The highest proportion of participants who engage with our activities include: postgraduate taught students (PGT) 70.0%, undergraduate students (UG) 23.9% and Foundation students (F) 2.0%, 0.2% of postgraduate research students (PGR) also participate in our initiatives.

Level of study	Total
F	2.0%
UG	23.9%
PGT	70.0%
PGR	0.2%
Unknown	3.9%

Widening Access

We support widening access and participation through our activities. 20.5% of our participants are from underrepresented backgrounds whereas 79.5% do not.

Widening Access	Total
Yes	20.5%
No	79.5%

Faculty

The highest proportion of participants are from the following faculties: CBASS (49.6%), CEDPS (28.8%) and CHLS (20.5%).

Faculty	Total
CEDPS	28.8%
CHLS	20.5%
CBASS	49.6%
Unknown	1.1%

Acknowledgements

Brunel University London Staff

- Professor Geoff Rodgers, Pro Vice Chancellor
– Enterprise and Employment
- Jonathan Bainbridge, Director, Professional Development Centre
- Emmy Botterman, Entrepreneurship and Employability Consultant
- Farida Danmeri, Entrepreneurship and Employability Consultant
- Emily Arnold, Entrepreneur Hub Officer

External Mentors and Service Providers

- The Central Research Laboratory Team
- The Conduit Team
- Adam Bennett and Michael Ellis, Ellis IP
- Warrick Harniess, Founder of Scandinavia Stories
- Stuart Hartley, Founder of Incrementa Consulting
- Kay Kukoyi, Founder of Purposeful Group
- The Makerversity Team
- Andrew Mossop, Founder of Student Skill Store
- Minal Patel, Founder of Marketing by Minal
- Anil Puri, Founder of PetInstincts
- Erica Purvis, Founder of Technical Nature
- The Red Bull Team
- Santander Universities UK
- Jonathan Seymour, Accountant, Moore Kingston Smith

Event Speakers

- Rob Bourne, Global Brand Marketing Manager, Red Bull
- Anastasia Georgievskaya, Co-founder of Scentient
- Francis Jones, Founder of STEM@Home
- Josh King and Georgia Williams, Founders of Zeal
- Jeffrey Oyinlola, Founder of Pick Up The Mic
- Simone Panella, Founder of Dyamotech
- Simon Poulter, Relationship Manager, Santander Universities UK

Event Supporters

- Louie Harvey, Musician and Founder of FunkyBird,
Product Design Engineering Student
- Louis Hitchcock, Photographer, Design Student



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